



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



RIBBON CUTTING CEREMONY TO BE HELD AT UNIVERSITY CENTER RAPID CITY

With veterans making up over 12% of the student population at the University Center-Rapid City, students felt there was a need for a Veterans Resource Center. Last spring, students began looking for available space that could be easily converted into an area for veterans to congregate, have easy access to support materials, and to simply relax. And after a year's work, military students and veterans will now have a place of their own with the opening of the Veterans Resource Center.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held Friday, March 15, at 1:00 p.m. in the University Center-Rapid City (UC-RC) Veterans Resource Center (4300 Cheyenne Blvd.). Remarks will be provided by Joshua Kosola, UCRC Veteran's Club president; Gov. Dennis Dauggard; Maj. Gen. Timothy Reisch, adjutant general South Dakota National Guard; Jerry Wright, commander VFW Post #1273; Col. Mark Weatherington, 28th Bomb Wing commander, Ellsworth Air Force Base; Black Hills State University President Kay Schallenkamp; and South Dakota Board of Regents President Kathryn Johnson.

The Veterans Resource Center will cater to students from all of the six South Dakota public universities attending the UC-RC. The focus of the Veterans Resource Center is not on the space itself but on the services provided. With the help of many faculty and staff members, support from the Veterans Upward Bound Program and the veterans themselves, the center will offer a variety of services including:

- Tutoring
- Informational sessions with the VA
- Veterans Club meetings
- New student orientation sessions for veterans
- Basic prep time and course review
- Job search assistance and resume building
- Social and networking with other area veterans clubs such as Black Hills State University and South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.

Inside this issue:

Purple Up—Month of the Military Child	2
American Indian Veterans Symposium	3
SD Veterans Commission Meeting	3
129th MPAD Welcomes Six Out-of-State Soldiers	4
VA Tele-Health Services	5
Upcoming Events	6



GOVERNOR DECLARES APRIL “MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD”

April marks the nation’s “Month of the Military Child,” a time to honor our community youth impacted by deployment. It is no secret that our military children face many challenges before, during and after deployment of their loved ones. Parental separation, increased responsibilities at home, and frequent moves, are just a few areas that military kids must navigate through.

In his proclamation, Governor Dugaard notes that many brave South Dakotans serving our Armed Forces have demonstrated their courage and commitment to freedom by serving in our military and have sacrificed a great deal, including leaving their families behind. In proclaiming April the Month of the Military Child, Governor Dugaard is asking for a month-long salute to our military children to celebrate their spirit, commitment and sacrifices. These kids are an inspiration and a source of pride, and it is fitting that we celebrate their spirits and commitments to our country.

Let’s show them our support by being part of “Purple Up! For Military Kids” Day on Friday, April 12, 2013. Wearing purple is a visible way to show support and thank military children for their strength and sacrifices. Purple is the color that symbolizes all branches of the military, as it is the combination of Army green, Coast Guard blue, Air Force blue, Marine red and Navy blue.

With a population of over 800,000 South Dakota can create a “sea of purple.” What if all the golfers shot purple balls on the 12th? What if the tennis team used purple tennis balls on the 12th? What if the local bakery served sandwiches on purple buns? What if the local malt shop served purple malts? “LET’S PURPLE UP SOUTH DAKOTA!!!!”



STATE OFFICES CLOSE AT NOON MARCH 29

State offices will close at noon on Friday, March 29.



AMERICAN INDIAN VETERANS SYMPOSIUM


The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will be hosting an "American Indian Veterans Symposium" April 30-May 1. The symposium will be held at the Holiday Inn Rushmore Plaza in Rapid City, SD.

Registration is free. Reserve a seat by contacting Peter.Vicaire@va.gov or by calling 651-405-5676.


Room reservations (\$77/night) can be made by calling 605-348-4000 and asking for the IHS/Veterans Affairs room block.

Secretary Zimmerman and Director Claussen will be representing the South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs at this symposium.

In addition to the items listed on the agenda, there will also be PTSD screening. Social Security staff will be in attendance both days and available to assist veterans and the Mobile Vet Center will be set up in the Rushmore Plaza Holiday Inn parking lot.




Office of Tribal Government Relations



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

RUSHMORE PLAZA HOLIDAY INN

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA



<u>TUESDAY, APRIL 30</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY, MAY 1</u>
0800-0830 Color Guard ~ Blessing ~ Opening Comments	0800 Prayer ~ Opening Comments
0830-0930 VA "Healthcare 101": Eligibility, Enrollment, Billing	0800-1000 Housing in Indian Country: Native American Direct Loan (NADL); Specially-Adapted Housing (SAH); HUD ONAP; IHS: Housing/Water/Sewer
0930-1030 VA/Tribal Health/IHS: Reimbursements Agreements	1000-1100 VA Homeless Programs: Grant & Per Diem/SSVF
1030-1100 Home Health Initiative/Type 2 Diabetes Prevention	1100-1130 Department of Labor - Veterans Employment & Training Services
1100-1130 Suicide Prevention	1130-1200 Veterans Justice Outreach
1130-1200 Women Veterans	1200-1300 Lunch
1200-1300 Lunch	1300-1400 "VBA 101": Benefits/Education
1300-1400 PTSD	1400-1430 VA For Vets (Working for VA)
1400-1445 <i>Nagi Kikcho Pi</i> : "Calling One's Spirit"	1430-1530 Native American Development Corporation: Government Contracting for Veteran-Owned Businesses
1445-1530 Role of the Veteran in the Tribal Community	1530-1600 U.S. Small Business Administration: Office of Native American Affairs (ONAA)
1530-1630 Listening Session: Stephanie Birdwell; Charles Claussen; John Garcia; Larry Zimmerman;	

SD VETERANS COMMISSION TO MEET

The South Dakota Veterans Commission will meet Thursday, March 21, at the South Dakota National Guard Museum (301 E. Dakota Avenue) in Pierre.

Agenda items include: East River Veterans Home, East River Veterans Cemetery, definition of a veteran, study of delivery of services to veterans, sequestration impacts, and the Commission's mission.

A complete agenda for the meeting can be found on the Department's website at:

<http://mva.sd.gov/download/Veteran%20Commission/Commission%20Agenda%20March%202013.pdf>

129TH MPAD WELCOMES SIX OUT-OF-STATE SOLDIERS

Brig. Gen. Craig Johnson, South Dakota Army National Guard's assistant adjutant general, welcomed six out-of-state soldiers into the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) for a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan by placing the coyote patch on their left sleeves while at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., March 9.

"The patch symbolizes one team, one fight," said Johnson. "It builds strength within the organization, resiliency, unity and comradeship to be able to do the mission."

The six new members join the 11 current 129th MPAD members from South Dakota. The mission of the unit is to tell the military's story through print and broadcast journalism and embed civilian media.

"The 129th was short a few personnel to be able to deploy to Afghanistan," said Maj. Robert Asscherick, 129th commander. "We put positions in the Tour of Duty system and these soldiers were dedicated enough to apply for those positions and take time away from their families to deploy with strangers to a strange land."

The Tour of Duty system advertises active-duty deployment opportunities. Its Internet site allows members of the National Guard and Army Reserve to find and volunteer for active-duty tours.

The soldiers who received the coyote patch Saturday were: Staff Sgt. Jerry Saslav from Framingham, Mass.; Sgt. Brittany Armstrong from Eugene, Ore.; Sgt. Anita VanderMolen from Salem, Ore.; Sgt. Joshua Edwards from Summerville, S.C.; Spc. Ryan Scott from Gilroy, Calif.; and Spc. Margaret Taylor from Alexandria, VA.

"I felt very welcomed and very proud to be a part of this South Dakota unit," said VanderMolen. "I felt like arms were welcoming me in."

"It is highly important to me to make them feel at home," said Asscherick. "Today, this patch ceremony helps them feel like they are a part of the unit."



VETERANS AND FAMILIES INVITED TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TELEHEALTH SERVICES

Have you ever wanted to learn about emerging technology that keeps you in contact with your Doctor's office without actually being there?

Visit the VA Black Hills Health Care System's (VABHHCS) Fort Meade VA Medical Center, Hot Springs VA Medical Center and Rapid City Community Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) in March and interact with the VA's telehealth mobile cart displays.

Telehealth services improve veterans' access to care by adding health care options in non-traditional locations. One specific telehealth service being promoted is home telehealth. Home telehealth is a VA program that uses a special monitor connected to a veteran's home telephone line or a cellular modem. This monitor records and forwards their health reports, like blood pressure, weight and medications taken, to a trained nurse at the VABHHCS.

“Telehealth is especially important for veterans who live in rural areas, like many who get care through VABHHCS,” said Lisa Frasier, telehealth coordinator. “Home telehealth allows the veteran to participate in health care directly from their home, and avoid a trip to the clinic.” Telehealth services are becoming more common throughout the health care industry and the VA continues to find new ways to use technology to increase access to care. “We want to familiarize veterans with the equipment and methods so they are comfortable using them to help achieve their health goals,” Frasier said.

During the month of March, veterans can see some of the telehealth tools up close at the VABHHCS facilities. Veterans can also meet clinic staff involved in the telehealth program to ask questions and learn more about the services offered. Mobile carts and telehealth equipment will be set up in the following locations:

- Main lobby at the Fort Meade VA Medical Center – Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8-10 a.m.
- Main lobby at the Hot Springs VA Medical Center – Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8:30-10:30 a.m.
- Telehealth Clinical Technician office, in the Mental Health area, at the Rapid City Community Based Outpatient Clinic – Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-10:30 a.m.



Upcoming Events

Mar 21—SD Veterans Commission Meeting—SDNG Museum—Pierre 8:00 am—3:00 pm
 Apr. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
 Apr. 11—Yankton Career Fair—Regional Technical Education Center—1:00-6:00 pm
 April 12—Purple Up
 April 18—Operation Black Hills Cabin Open House—Custer
 April 19-21—VABHHCS Women Veterans Retreat—Ft. Meade VA Medical Center
 May 3-5—DAV State Convention—The Lodge—Deadwood
 May 11—Yellow Ribbon for the 935th—Rapid City
 May 19—Yellow Ribbon for the 927th—Sioux Falls
 Jul. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
 Oct. 1—Black Hills National Cemetery Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—9:00 am
 Dec. 15—Wreaths Across America Ceremony—Black Hills National Cemetery—10:00 am



Audry Ricketts, Public Information Officer
 South Dakota Department of the Military
 South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs
 Soldiers and Sailors Building
 425 E Capitol Avenue
 Pierre, SD 57501
 Phone: 605-773-8242
 E-mail address: audry.ricketts@state.sd.us
 Web site: <http://mva.sd.gov>

